IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows, substituting any amended claim(s) for the corresponding

pending claim(s):

1.   (Currently Amended)   A method of converting text to speech comprising:

receiving a list of textual units, where each said textual unit is one of a word, a prefix or a

suffix;

for each textual unit comprising a word,

    locating an associated speech sample in a memory; and

    appending said associated speech sample to an output signal.

2.   (Original)   The method of claim 1 wherein one said textual unit in said list is

indicated as not having an associated speech sample in memory and said method further comprises:

    passing said indicated textual unit to a secondary text to speech engine;

    receiving a speech sample converted from said indicated textual unit from said secondary text

to speech engine; and

    appending said converted speech sample to said output signal.

1   3.   (Original)   The method of claim 2 wherein each said speech sample in said

2   memory comprises a processed recording of a voice talent and said secondary text to speech engine

3   comprises a phonetic text to speech engine based on said voice talent.

1   4.   (Original)   The method of claim 1 wherein a consecutive plurality of said textual

2   . units in said list represent a whole word, said method further comprising:

3   for each textual unit in said consecutive plurality of said textual units, locating an associated

4   speech sample in said memory;

5   creating a speech unit by splicing together said plurality of associated speech samples; and

6   appending said speech unit to said output signal.

1   5.   (Original)   The method of claim 4 further comprising, after said splicing,

2   processing said speech unit to remove discontinuities.

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1   6.   (Original)   A method of pre-processing a text file comprising:

2   receiving a text file;

3   parsing said text file into textual units, where each said parsed textual unit is one of a word,

4   a prefix or a suffix; and

5   for each one of said parsed textual units, if said one of said parsed textual units corresponds

6   to a stored textual unit in a vocabulary of textual units, adding said stored textual unit to a list.

1   7.   (Original)   The method of claim 6 further comprising, for each one of said parsed

2   textual units, if said one of said parsed textual units does not correspond to one of said stored textual

3   units,

4   marking said parsed textual unit as being out of vocabulary; and

5   adding said marked textual unit to said list.

1   8.   (Original)   The method of claim 7 where said marking comprises pre-pending a

2   character to said textual unit.

9.   (Currently Amended)   A text to speech converter comprising:

means for receiving a list of textual units, where each said textual unit is one of a word, a

prefix or a suffix;

for each textual unit comprising a word,

means for locating an associated speech sample in a memory; and

means for appending said associated speech sample to an output signal.

10.   (Currently Amended)   A text to speech converter comprising a processor operable

to:

receive a list of textual units, where each said textual unit is one of a word, a prefix or a

suffix;

for each textual unit comprising a word,

locate an associated speech sample in a memory; and

append said associated speech sample to an output signal.

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11.   (Currently Amended)   A computer readable medium for providing program control

2   to a processor, said processor included in a text to speech converter, said computer readable medium

3   adapting said processor to be operable to:

4   receive a list of textual units, where each said textual unit is one of a word, a prefix or a

5   suffix;

6   for each textual unit comprising a word,

7   locate an associated speech sample in a memory; and

8   append said associated speech sample to an output signal.

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1   12.   (Currently Amended)   A text to speech conversion system comprising:

2   a text file pre-processor operable to:

3   receive a text file;

4   parse said text file into textual units, where each said parsed textual unit is one of a

5   word, a prefix or a suffix; and

6   for each one of said parsed textual units, if said one of said parsed textual units

7   corresponds to a stored textual unit in a vocabulary of textual units, add said stored textual units to

8   a list;

9   and a textual unit processor operable to:

10   receive said list of textual units, where each said textual unit is one of a word, a prefix

11   or a suffix;

12   for each textual unit [, of] in said list comprising a word:

13   locate an associated speech sample in a memory; and

14   append said associated speech sample to an output signal.

1   13.   (Canceled).

1   14.   (Original)   A data structure including a field for a textual unit and a field for a

2   speech sample associated with said textual unit, where said textual unit is one of a word, a prefix,

3   or a suffix.

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1   15.   (Previously Added)   The data structure of claim 14 further comprising a field for

2   a phoneme that said textual unit starts with, and a field for a phoneme that the textual unit ends with.

1   . 16.   (Previously Added)   The method of claim 7 further comprising:

2   passing said marked textual unit to a secondary text to speech engine;

3   receiving a speech sample converted from said marked textual unit from said secondary text

4   to speech engine; and

        appending said converted speech sample to said output signal.

1   17.   (Previously Added)   The method of claim 8 further comprising:

2   passing said marked textual unit to a secondary text to speech engine;

3   receiving a speech sample converted from said marked textual unit from said secondary text

4   to speech engine; and

5   appending said converted speech sample to said output signal.

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1   18.   (Previously Added)   The text to speech conversion system of claim 12 wherein:

2   said pre-processor is further operable to:

3   for each one of said parsed textual units, if said one of said parsed textual units does

4   not correspond to one of said stored textual units, marking said parsed textual unit as being out of

vocabulary and add said marked textual unit to said list; and

6   said textual unit processor further comprises:

7   a secondary text to speech engine operable to receive said marked textual unit and

8   convert said marked textual unit into a speech sample.